

Remarks

Upon entry of the Amendment and Reply filed January 6, 2003, claims 1-59 are pending in the application, with 1, 11, 23, 32, and 45 being the independent claims.

Based on the above-noted amendment and remarks, and the Examiner's Advisory Action (Paper No. 9) in response to the amendment and remarks, Applicant submits the following remarks.

Response to Examiner's Comments Regarding Clarity of Amended Claims

The Examiner states in the Advisory Action that claims 1 and 32, as presented in the Amendment and Reply of January 6, 2003, contain insufficient structure because a power input means is lacking between the prime mover and the power dividing means. Accordingly, the Examiner states these claims are unclear as presented.

United States Patent and Trademark Office practice requires that claims define the patentable subject matter with a reasonable degree of particularity and distinctiveness. Definiteness must be analyzed, not in a vacuum, but in light of the content of the specification, the teachings in the art, and claim interpretation that would be given by one possessing the ordinary level of skill in the pertinent art. See 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; MPEP 2173.02.

In light of the disclosure, claims 1 and 32 are clear to one having ordinary skill in the art even though they do not expressly contain structure between the prime mover and the power dividing means. For example, Figure 13 clearly depicts that which is being claimed in claims 1 and 32. Additionally, a power input means is not essential to one

having ordinary skill in the art to understand each of claims 1 and 32. Accordingly, claims 1 and 32 are clear.

The Examiner also states that claims 11, 23, and 45, are unclear because these claims call for power to be transmitted directly to one of the output members and also for the power dividing means to share the power transmitted into the input member. Figure 13, for example, clearly shows power being transmitted directly to output member 73 via input member 74 and power dividing means 23 sharing the power from input member 74 between output member 73 and 71. Accordingly, claims 11, 23, and 45 are clear.

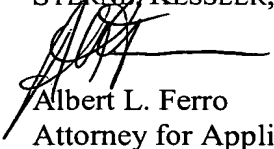
Conclusion

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Supplemental Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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